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The Norwegian South Polar Expedition: Discussion
Author(s): Ernest Shackleton and W. S. Bruce
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460 nautical miles (850 kiloms.)—has got the name "Queen Maud's ranges."

All the depôts—ten in all—were found, and the abundant provisions, of which we at last had plenty, were taken along down to 80°, where they were deposited. From 86° we didn't go on rations, but everybody could eat as much as he liked. On January 25, we arrived at our winter quarters after an absence of ninety-nine days. The distance home, 750 nautical miles (1400 kiloms.) was thus covered in thirty-nine days without a single day of rest. The daily average speed was 19·2 nautical miles (36 kiloms.). On our arrival we had two sledges and eleven dogs safe and sound. Not even a moment had we helped the dogs to pull the sledges. Our provisions consisted of pemmican, biscuits, milk in powder and chocolate. Not much of a variation, but a healthy, nutritious food which invigorated the body, just what it needed. The best proof was, that we always felt well and were never raving about food, which has been so common in all longer sledge journeys and an infallible sign of deficient nourishment.

In the meantime Lieutenant Prestrud and his two companions had succeeded in doing excellent work to the east and in the neighbourhood in the Bay of Whales. They succeeded in reaching King Edward's Land—discovered by Scott—and confirm what he had seen. Alexandra mountains appeared to be a wholly snow-covered crest—1200 feet high—stretching in a south-easterly direction as far as the eye could see, the northern boundary being two bare peaks—Scott's Nunataks—1700 feet high. This expedition's exploration of Framheim's surroundings is of great interest. It appears from their observations, that the Bay of Whales is formed by underlying land still snow-covered.

At the same time as our work inshore was going on, Captain Nilsen with his companions on the *Fram* succeeded in doing work which, from a scientific point of view, probably will turn out to be the most valuable of the expedition. On an 8000 nautical miles' cruise from Buenos Aires to Africa and back, he took a series of oceanographic stations, sixty in all. Twice they circumnavigated the world, voyages full of dangers and toil. The voyage out of the ice in the autumn 1911 was of a very serious character. They were ten men all told. Through darkness and fog, cyclones and hurricanes, pack-ice and icebergs, it became their lot to beat their way out. Last but not least let me mention, that the same ten men, on February 15, 1911, hoisted the Norwegian flag further south than a ship has ever floated before.

A fine record in the century of records:—Farthest north, farthest south.

The PRESIDENT (before the lecture): A year and a half ago, at our annual dinner in London, I said that I hoped it might fall to my lot during my term of office to offer the right hand of welcome to the discoverer of the South Pole;

and that, whether he proved to be a Norwegian, an Englishman, or a Japanese —for all three countries had sent out expeditions to the Antarctic Region— it would be a proud day in the history of geographical exploration and a happy day for myself. The occasion has arrived, and we are here to-night to welcome, and to receive an account of his journey from, Captain Roald Amundsen, the brave Norwegian who has carried off the prize.

Captain Amundsen is no stranger to us. Five years ago, in 1907, he received the highest honour that it is in the power of our Society to bestow, viz. our Gold Medal, for his splendid work in the North Polar region. He had just returned from devoting three years of arduous work with a small band of his compatriots to exploration in the neighbourhood of the North Magnetic Pole, which he relocated, and in a tiny vessel of less than fifty tons burden he had been the first to sail through the entire North-West Passage from Atlantic to Pacific— that passage which an Englishman, Sir John Franklin, had been the first to discover, which another Englishman, Sir Robert McClure, had been the first to traverse, partly on the ice, from sea to sea.

The North Polar region has always been the special love of Captain Amundsen's life, and to it, I believe, he is still prepared to devote years of labour, drifting on that broad ocean current that has already carried his countryman and patron, Nansen, so far; and thereby resuming the scientific work for which he has received such liberal support from his compatriots. In the interval, fired by the achievements of our countrymen, he diverged from his appointed path, and was suddenly heard of at the other end of the globe, camped on the Great Ice Barrier, with the famous *Fram*, Nansen's ship, which brought him, lying at anchor in the Bay of Whales. It was from this starting-point that he and a chosen band of his fellow-countrymen, five in number, finally started, on October 20, 1911, for that swift march to the Pole, the incidents and the issue of which he is here to narrate to-night.

You will gain from his narrative and his slides a picture of that wonderful region; no frozen plain of snow and ice, except on the polar plateau itself— which is 10,000 feet above the level of the sea—but a land of mighty peaks 15,000 feet in height, of riven glaciers, and of formidable danger.

Our guest was attended throughout by a good fortune upon which we congratulate him: fine weather, sound health, a transport that never broke down, a commissariat that never failed. With these invaluable aids, he and his brave companions traversed the 750 miles that separated them from the South Pole and the same distance back with a speed that has never been equalled in the history of Polar exploration; and on December 14, 1911, he planted the flag of his country upon the Pole itself. I have seen the results of his scientific observations, which have been carefully worked out by the learned Prof. Alexander, of Christiania, and there cannot be a doubt that, though the Pole itself is not a spike or spot in the ground visible to the naked eye, Amundsen and his men crossed and recrossed the actual site.

But pray do not imagine that luck or good fortune is the sole or the main ingredient in such a success. Polar triumphs are not compassed without originality in conception, or without running great human risks; they are not achieved without a courage, a patience, and an endurance that dignify humanity; above all, their main justification lies in the addition that they make to the sum total of human knowledge. The whole lifetime of Captain Amundsen has been a scientific preparation for successful accomplishment, in the laboratory, on the sea, and amid Polar ice and snow.

He will now himself tell us the tale of his adventures and their results. It

is my agreeable task to say that as Englishmen we do not grudge to a Norseman the success which is not inaptly won by the descendant of a race of born explorers and traditional pioneers. We know no jealousy—though there is abundant emulation—in the field of exploration; and even while we are honouring Amundsen this evening, I am convinced that his thoughts, no less than ours, are turning to our own brave countryman, Captain Scott, still shrouded in the glimmering half-light of the Antarctic, whose footsteps reached the same Pole, doubtless only a few weeks later than Amundsen, and who with unostentatious persistence, and in the true spirit of scientific devotion, is gathering in, during an absence of three years, a harvest of scientific spoil, which when he returns will be found to render his expedition the most notable of modern times.

The names of these two men will be perpetually linked, along with that of a third, Sir Ernest Shackleton, in the history of Antarctic exploration, and two of the three we shall have the pleasure of hearing to-night.

I will now call upon Captain Amundsen to read his paper.

After the paper, Sir ERNEST SHACKLETON: I will be very brief over this, because time is getting late. It is very easy to move a vote of thanks after hearing a lecture such as this, and all I can say is that I congratulate Captain Amundsen most heartily on the way he has told the story and on the way he has done the work. Lord Curzon, at the beginning of the lecture, said that a great point about it was organization and efficiency of equipment, and that seems to have been the keynote of the whole expedition, and it is by efficiency, not only by good luck, that such an expedition can come to a successful conclusion. Of course, I say quite frankly that we all here no doubt wish it had been a British expedition that had got there first, but none the less we are proud of Amundsen having got there, and we can all recognize that not only has he done the work well, but was supported by loyal comrades. There is one thing—throughout the lecture to-night I never heard the word "I" mentioned; it was always "we." I think that that is the way in which Amundsen got his men to work along with him, and it brought the thing to a successful conclusion. I have nothing more to add but to give a vote of thanks to Captain Amundsen for the splendid lecture and the work he has done so well, and which every one in the world is proud of.

The PRESIDENT: I am going to ask Dr. W. S. Bruce, one of our most successful scientific explorers, who himself has been three times to the Antarctic Regions, besides being one of our Gold Medallists, to second the vote of thanks.

Dr. W. S. BRUCE: It gives me very great pleasure indeed to second the vote of thanks which Sir Ernest Shackleton has so ably proposed. We have listened to Captain Amundsen's account of his work in the South Polar regions with intense interest, though one feels that he has really told us very little in proportion to all he has done. Thinking of the fine record from the athletic point of view, one and all of us agree in giving all praise to Captain Amundsen for his successful efforts in that direction. But this Society must do something more than that, and it has done so this evening in recognizing the valuable scientific work Captain Amundsen has done in the South Polar regions. He has twice traversed a course of more than 900 miles over land and ice, which no human being has ever traversed before; and has consequently brought back entirely new geographical information of an extensive unknown portion of the Earth's surface, thus adding to the sum of human knowledge in a most important manner. The map he showed us and the pictures of the lands in those regions were of the greatest interest. It is of special importance that I have heard from him to-day that he has succeeded in bringing back rock-specimens, not only from

south of 85° S., but from King Edward Land, which may give us the clue to the whole geology of the Antarctic continent on that side of the pole. Most important is it that he has found the mountain range that Shackleton discovered extending to the south-east as far as 80° S., and also that from a point in 86° S. he has found a range stretching to the north-east. He also saw an "appearance of land" between that range and Edward Land to the east of his track in 83° S. That solves a very important problem; for there are two theories of the Antarctic continent which have been advocated in recent years. The one is that there is one land-mass, and the other that there are two land-masses divided by a barrier running from the Ross sea to the Weddell sea. To my mind the researches of the *Scotia* condemned the idea that there could be such a barrier running across. Later Shackleton's discoveries condemned that suggestion, which was not founded on sound scientific fact, and now Amundsen has thoroughly cleared up the matter, for he found the great mountain range bounding the inland plateau to the north continuing north-east to Edward Land, thus shutting the Ross Barrier into a bight. That is a scientific result of the greatest possible importance. Amundsen has also done much more which one cannot refer to this evening, in meteorological, oceanographical, and other lines of scientific research. Great as has been my pleasure in listening to Captain Amundsen to-night, still more am I glad to have been allowed the privilege of seconding the vote of thanks to him.

The PRESIDENT: I will now put the vote of thanks for one of the most absorbing and, as Sir Ernest Shackleton truly said, one of the most modest lectures to which we have ever listened, and I almost wish that in our tribute of admiration we could include those wonderful good-tempered, fascinating dogs, the true friends of man, without whom Captain Amundsen would never have got to the Pole. I ask you to signify your assent by your applause.

SOUTHERN NIGERIA: SOME CONSIDERATIONS OF ITS STRUCTURE, PEOPLE, AND NATURAL HISTORY.*

By A. E. KITSON, F.G.S.

THIS paper merely outlines briefly some of the natural features and the life of the colony, as want of space permits of nothing more. The observations recorded were made while I was conducting the operations of the Mineral Survey to the four boundaries of the colony, during a period extending over five years. The routes taken are marked on the accompanying map. During that time most of the important districts of the colony were visited. As far as the exigencies of survey work permitted and opportunities arose, I took numerous photographs and phonograph records of native songs, etc. In many places a judicious use of the phonograph proved of great assistance to the party by winning over truculent or unfriendly people, and thus inducing them to supply the food and shelter refused by them but a few minutes before.

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* Royal Geographical Society, April 22, 1912. Map, p. 96.